

# West Cassia

Soil and Water Conservation District



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Burley, ID 83318  
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www.minicassiaswcd.com

SWCD Board Meetings: 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 11:00 am

## Mission Statement

*To encourage responsible natural resource management and to implement conservation goals which improve air, soil, and water quality while improving wildlife habitat.*

*To educate both youth and adults about our local conservation practices and needs.*

## Top Priorities and Resource Concerns

### 1. Water Resource

Encouraging good conservation practices which save water and reduce soil erosion such as conversion to sprinkler systems, promoting benefits of crop residue, conservation tillage, and cross slope farming practices. Make efforts to improve the groundwater within the Marsh Creek Nitrate Priority Area.

### 2. Rangeland

Education and encouragement of practices such as brush control, range seeding, pest control, and fire control practices. Address drought concerns through stock water improvements and planned grazing systems.

### 3. Direct Seed and Cover Crops

Encouraging farmers and landowners to implement new and innovative farm practices. Educate landowners on the benefits of implementing practices such as the use of cover crops to improve soil health. Have available a Direct Seed drill for landowners to use to run test plots.

### 4. Education

Education is the main focus for the districts. By educating students, while young, it helps them to understand the importance of being good stewards of the land. Another byproduct of educating children is that information is then passed on to their parents.

## District Operations Accomplishments

### Seedling Tree Sale

In early spring, Mini-Cassia Districts held their annual Tree Sale. Despite our office being unavailable to the public the three districts managed to sell over 2650 seedlings of the nine different varieties offered. As always, we talked on the phone to so many great people that are dedicated in promoting good conservation practices. Some of the landowners were starting Windbreak projects. They ordered hundreds of trees. This year each of the three districts profited \$1732.39. Income from these sales is used to help incorporate good conservation practices and help with student awards such as: college scholarships, Know Your Government scholarships, Natural Resources Camp scholarships, as well as prizes for speech and poster contest winners.

### Awards Banquet

In the summer of 2020 Cassia Soil and Water Conservation Districts held their annual Awards Banquet and Picnic in conjunction with their monthly Board Meetings. They honored their Cooperators of the Year with a jacket with their names embroidered on it. Two new district employees, and a new Cotterel Boat Station manager also received jackets and were welcomed to the team. West Cassia District Supervisor Richard Kunau received his 15 year service pin. The banquet was a success.

### Summer Picnic

After three times of rescheduling because of Covid restrictions, West Cassia and East Cassia opted for a Board Meeting Awards Banquet and Picnic. Each Board handed out awards and recognized a student with a \$500 scholarship. Natural Resource Camp (NRC) sadly had to cancel camp this year due to Covid, but they are looking forward to a great NRC 2021.

## FY2020 Revenue 7/1/19 - 6/30/20

\$ 17,475.20	ISWCC
\$ 6,000.00	Cassia County
\$ 1,732.39	Project-Tree Sale (per district)
\$ 20,565.69	Administrative Funds

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**\$ 45,773.28 TOTAL**

## West Cassia Soil and Water Conservation District

### Board/Business Meetings

Supervisors and district employees attended the Fall Division IV meeting hosted by Gooding Soil & Water Conservation District. Supervisors and employees worked hard since April 2020 to prepare for the 78<sup>th</sup> annual IASCD conference set for November 10-13<sup>th</sup> in Burley, Idaho. Richard Kunau, chairman of West Cassia SWCD, also serves as Treasurer on the IASCD Board. District supervisors and district employees were disappointed when the meeting had to be canceled in mid-September. All the information will be saved and they will be prepared for the next meeting. All district financial information and documents were/are available for public review.

### Operations

In March, board supervisors met with elected Cassia County Commissioners to review the proposed budget and activities as a basis for requesting county funding. The district was awarded \$5,000.00 from Cassia County. The districts completed yearly reports due to ISWCC and completed a proposed budget for Fiscal Year 2020. West Cassia SWCD has an official financial audit conducted each year. Audit review and findings will be available for public review.

### Education and Outreach

West Cassia awarded one college scholarship totaling \$500.00. Additional donations were given in support of education; \$250.00 Poster Contest awards, \$200.00 Speech contestants, \$50.00 Forestry Contest, and \$300 for Know Your Government (KYG) Scholarship. FFA and 4H students from all around Idaho participated in a State Land Judging Event. Even though it was a windy day the students enjoyed competing with each other. They celebrated 50 Years of land judging and received T-shirts and patches. The Preston FFA placed 1st and the Rigby FFA placed 2<sup>nd</sup>. They won travel scholarships for national competition. The contest was held Cassia County. NRCS workers, District employees, and SWCD Supervisors provided the equipment and labor. Over 30 volunteers assisted, including County Commissioners and a soil Scientist.



### Projects

These Mini-Cassia area Soil and Water Conservation Districts continue working together to promote the Direct Seed Drill program. 2020 was the sixth year to rent out the Seed drills to landowners. Districts have continued promoting good soil health practices which benefit the landowners in many ways. One way is the reduction of pesticide use. Some of the other benefits include improved water infiltration, reducing the loss of top soil from blowing winds, and improving air quality and individual health. In many cases, landowners can submit a request for a partial seed rebate for purchasing cover crop seed and renting the seed drill. An annual Soil Health workshop is held in the first quarter of each year to help inform and educate those interested in how cover crop planting aids soil health. This year's workshop was held in February. West Cassia Chairman Richard Kunau welcomed everyone. The special keynote speaker was internationally renowned and highly respected groundcover and soils ecologist Dr. Christine Jones. Other presenters included: regional soil health specialist Marlon Winger, Brian Kossman, Rob Giesbrecht, and Linda Schott, Ph.D. After lunch other speakers and educators included: Luke and Sara Adams, Jason Thomas, Grant Loomis, Steve Hines, Cameron Williams, and Joel Packham, Cassia County Agent. This workshop was available FREE to patrons and also offers FREE pesticide credits.

West Cassia partnered with the Idaho State Department of Agriculture for the fourth year to run the Cotterel Watercraft Inspection Station, under the Idaho Invasive Species program. The station was open February-November. Again, the Idaho State Police helped immensely in keeping employees safe and turning boaters around that bypassed the check station. The district was responsible for day to day operations at the station, managing employees, finances and payroll. The district received \$17,278 in administrative funds from the project.



### West Cassia SWCD Board of Supervisors

Richard Kunau	Chairman	137 N Hwy 77 Declo, ID 83323	richardkunau@gmail.com	2 of 3
Jordan Searle	Vice-Chairman	635 South 450 East Burley, ID 83318	jordansearle@gmail.com	
Kathy Poulton	Treasurer	2200 S 605 W Oakley, ID 83346	poukathy@pmt.org	
Ken Black	Member	352 S Hwy 27 Burley, ID 83318	ken.nina@msn.com	
Brent Stoker	Member	745 E 500 S Burley, ID 83318	bstoker@safelink.net	

**IDAHO SOIL & WATER  
CONSERVATION COMMISSION**

**PERFORMANCE  
REPORT  
CERTIFICATION**

**DISTRICT:** West Cassia SWCD

**FOR YEAR:**

2020

**DUE :**

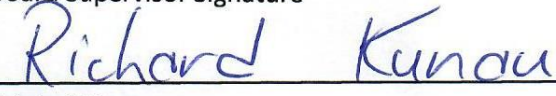
December 21, 2020

**CERTIFICATION**

On behalf of my local Board of Supervisors, I hereby certify that the attached Performance Report is true and accurate, and further submit said Report for the above named District and fiscal year.

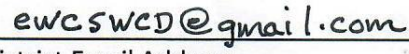
A copy of this Performance Report shall be kept at the District office and is available for public inspection.

  
Board Supervisor Signature

  
Printed Name

  
Date

  
District Telephone

  
District Email Address

**FOR SWC USE ONLY:**

**DATE OF CONFIRMATION:**